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Institute of International Education

International Relations Clubs

Syllabus No. III

The History of Russia from
earliest times

A Preliminary Syllabus

By BARON S. A. KORFF, LL.D.

Formerly Professor of Russian Law and History of Law at the University of
Helsingfors, Finland, and the Women's University of Petrograd, Russia



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PREFACE

In the course of my lectures in eastern and southern universities and colleges, I found invariably the greatest interest in Russia, her history and institutions, and her present unfortunate condition and sufferings. There is no doubt whatever that the present American generation feels intensely attracted by and is heartily in sympathy with the Russian people. And rightly may Americans be concerned with Russia's fate; no peace in Europe—and, hence, in the world—will be established; as long as the present conditions last in Russia; this probably is accepted at the present day as a truism by most educated people.

And yet, notwithstanding all this interest and sympathy of Americans, I found a very considerable lack of knowledge of Russia's past and present conditions, as well as a keen desire to learn more about the Russian people. There are available quite sufficient sources of information in the English language, but, unfortunately, the American reader is only too often misguided by political propaganda, which makes use of all recent information in distorting it and warping its real meaning.

The aim of the present syllabus is to help the American reader in his studies of Russia's history, in an impartial and non-political way, and give him a leading thread through the maze of modern literature. Of course, the very best book on Russian history is that of the late Moscow Professor, V. O. Kliuchevski; the first three volumes are now translated into English and published in this country. It is much more difficult to point out works concerning more recent events of Russian history and especially the causes and history of her great Revolution; most of what has been written relating to modern times is biased one way or another and does not give a fair account of the complicated social and economic processes of Russian life. Even Russians in this respect have yet done very little; in consequence, most foreign writers and investigators can hardly be blamed for their lack of understanding. Miliukov's book, "Russia and Its Crisis" (1905) and certainly Masaryk's two vol-

umes, "The Spirit of Russia," Macmillan Co., 1919, which gives the best picture of the ideology of the Russian revolutionary movement, are probably the best sources of information, though even they do not cover the whole ground. Much is still to be achieved, but this can be done only by the Russian historians themselves and the latter hardly will be able to start their work as long as the present conditions of social unrest last.

Every patriotic Russian must feel very grateful for the cordial sympathy invariably shown toward his country by Americans, and for the boundless hospitality that he always meets with in the United States.

Deep satisfaction must also be expressed to the Institute of International Education, of the Carnegie Endowment, for publishing this syllabus as a possible help in the study of Russian history, as well as for their endeavors to stimulate such studies among American students. Many of the Russian events could serve as a splendid example in our modern troubled times.

S. A. KORFF

New York
July, 1920

THE HISTORY OF RUSSIA

I. EARLY HISTORY OF THE SLAVS

- A. The pre-historic abode of the Slavs on the south coast of the Baltic.
Historical research of the XIX century was very much puzzled in locating the original dwelling places of the pre-historic Slavs and only the recent linguistic studies of Professor A. Shahmatov and others established the real pre-historic abode of the Slavic tribes on the southern and western shores of the Baltic.
- B. The first migratory movements south in the first centuries of our era. The Slavs on the Carpathian mountains.
Their causes, as compared to pre-historic tribal movements in Europe in general. Social structure and organization of the primitive Slavic tribes; their mode of living.
- C. Two main results of the migration south:
1. First contact with other races.
2. Split among the Slavic tribes.
- D. Early history and the chief tribal characteristics:
1. Of the Poles.
2. Of the Southern Slavs, moving constantly south, toward the Balkan Peninsula.
- E. The great trade routes north and south from the Baltic to the Black and Caspian seas and vice-versa.
The state of culture of the Norsemen in Scandinavia, the Greeks on the coasts of the Black Sea and the Persians in the Caspian region. Races inhabiting South Russia and Central Asia.
The meaning for the Eastern Slavs and for their primitive social organizations of the trade routes and especially of the contact with the Norsemen.
The social and military organization of the Norsemen.
- F. Gradual fusion of the Norse elements, especially of their military leaders, in the Slavic social body.
Direct consequence: new forms of the Slavic primitive state. The rôle of the Vietche or popular assembly of the Slavs. Their mode of government. Their trade.
The ancient legends concerning the founding of the Slavic state; VIII-IX centuries A. D. The way and purpose for which such legends were composed.
Outer relations and inner conditions of the Slavic tribal groups and settlements of the IX century.
The prince, as head of the tribe and military leader; his army; the local noblemen and traders.

- G. Influence of religion. Ancient rites of the Slavs.
Christianity introduced by Prince Vladimir; relations with Byzantium.
- II. Growth of culture, wealth and civilization among the Slavs living on the great trade route along the River Dnieper. Differences between the northern and southern tribes and settlements; Novgorod and Kiev.
Gradual increase of numbers and decrease in size of the Slavic states and tribal organizations. Their growing weakness and inter-tribal quarrels. Growth of the power of the prince and loss of influence of the popular assemblies (Vietche); rôle of the ruling class and their trade.
- I. Beginnings and causes of a new colonizing movement in the north-east, into forests inhabited by very primitive Finnish tribes.
Founding of Moscow, a small local colony. (The description of this new process constitutes one of the finest pages of Kliuchevski's book.)
The prince landlord; the ruling class; the peasant-colonists; final disappearance of the Vietche.
XI–XII centuries. Exceptional position of Novgorod and its commercial wealth. Two other republics—Pskov and Viatka.
- J. The split between the north-eastern tribes, which formed the Great-Russian stock, and the ones left in the south-west, later known as the Little Russians or Ukrainians.
Differences: of language, character, mode of living and occupation, climate, social organization and economic conditions.
- K. The Mongol invasion and conquest. Its important influences on the Slavs, on their social organization and institutions, their religion, economic conditions and future development. The dark XIII century.
The form of Mongol subjugation; military dominance; financial tribute and ways of collecting it; local autonomy of the Slavs. Relations between the Slav princes and the Mongol rulers.
Great differences between the situation in the south-west and in the north-east.
The rôle of the Slavs in stopping the further western movement of the Mongols into Europe.
Readings:
R. BEAZLEY, N. FORBES, G. A. BIRKETT, *History of Russia to Modern Times*; London, 1918.
J. CURTIN, *The Mongols, a History*, Boston, 1908.
J. CURTIN, *The Mongols in Russia*, Boston, 1908.
V. O. KLIUCHEVSKI, *History of Russia*, N. Y., Dutton & Co. The author is unanimously considered by the Russians as the greatest and most able modern historian.
A. RAMBAUD, *History of Russia from Earliest Times*, 1885 (Antiquated).

II. MEDIAEVAL EPOCH

- A. Remarkable growth of the Principality of Moscow.
Surprising results of the north-eastern colonization. Moscow's relations to neighboring principalities and their gradual subjugation by various clever means.

- Relations with Byzantium and the Church.
- Relations to the Mongol suzerains.
- Gradual weakening of the power of the latter.
- Moscow emerges triumphant and amazingly strong in the XV century.
- B. Causes of the foregoing process.
 - Inward consolidation.
 - Outward conquests.
 - Remarkable personalities of the Moscow princes, culminating in Ivan III, the Great.
 - Their family, house and system of government.
 - Relations to the now impoverished south-west.
- C. Social organization; economic conditions of Moscow.
 - Traits of feudalism in Moscow.
 - The class of aristocracy and mediatised princes.
 - The new bureaucracy, grown out of the Household of the Prince.
 - The commercial class; Moscow's trade and trade routes.
 - The peasants.
 - The serfs.
 - Foundation and growth of autocracy, reaching a climax under Ivan IV, the Terrible.
 - Influence of Byzantium and partly of the Mongols, as well as of the predilections of the Moscow princes.
 - Influence of the Church.
- D. Wars of the XV and XVI centuries.
 - The Poles, the Swedes, the Tartars.
 - Great expansion: east, south-east and south.
 - Colonization movement south and the first Cossack settlements.
 - Consolidation of these conquests.
 - Fight against the old aristocracy, especially by Ivan IV, and the reorganization of the central government.
 - The Duma and other institutions of the central government.
 - The local administration.
 - Finances and army.
 - New social classes.
 - The peasants, becoming *glæbae adscripti* towards the end of the XVI century. Land property.
- E. Weakness of the central government towards the end of the XVI century.
 - Dynastic troubles and strife among the ruling classes.
 - Other sources of inner weakness and outward danger.
- F. Great social upheaval and unrest in the beginning of the XVII century.
 - The founding of the new Romanoff dynasty and the election of Michael to the throne in 1613.
 - Final disappearance of the old aristocracy.
 - The new bureaucratic system of government; the Duma, Prikasi and other institutions; elected assemblies or Zemskie Sobori.
 - The local administration; landed proprietors; their serfs.

Wars of Michael and Alexis, especially against the Poles, Swedes and Turks.

Relations with the south-west.

- G. The meaning of the social unrest of the XVII century for the future development of Russia.

The religious strife between the established Church and the new sects and nonconformists.

The position and rôle of the Patriarch.

Education, literature and culture.

Trade and commerce.

Influence of western civilization.

Influx of foreigners.

Readings:

V. O. KLIUCHEVSKI, *History of Russia*.

J. MAVOR, *Economic History of Russia*, N. Y., Dutton, 1914.

A. RAMBAUD, *History of Russia*.

Readers, knowing Russian, can make use of the works of SERGEIEVICH, LAPPO-DANILEVSKI, PLATONOF and PAVLOF-SILVANSKI.

III. THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE—XVIII CENTURY

- A. Peter I, the Great. His youth and education; his personality; voyages abroad; advent to the throne and reforms.

Preliminary epoch and social surroundings.

Fight against tradition; western influences.

Peter's wars: with the Swedes, with the Poles and the Turks.

Founding of St. Petersburg; reasons and consequences.

The navy and the Baltic trade.

- B. Peter's reforms; general scope.

Central government; the senate.

Local administration; the new provinces and their governors.

Finances, army, recruiting system.

The peasant; the serf.

The Church (Patriarch and Synod); religion, education.

- C. Women on the throne.

Permanent changes.

Causes of the failure of some reforms and of the seeming instability of Peter's achievements.

- D. Catherine II. Her youth and education; her marriage and the dethronement of her husband; her personality and accomplishments; her literary work.

Social classes; the aristocracy, the gentry, the commercial class, the peasants and serfs.

The general assembly.

The great reform of the provincial administration; local self-government and Catherine's governor-generals.

Her relations with the western philosophers, Voltaire, Diderot and others.

- E. The wars of Catherine; her conquests and system of governing the conquered provinces. Partitions of Poland. The Ukraine. Turkey.
Russia finally reaches the Black Sea.
The economic and strategical meaning of the outlets to the seas. The straits of Constantinople.
Catherine's favorites; the serfs and the landed proprietors.
The educational system; literature; religion; cultural development and intellectual awakening.
Catherine's fear of the French Revolution.
- F. The reign of Catherine's insane son, Paul.

Readings:

R. BEAZLEY, N. FORBES, G. A. BIRKETT, *History of Russia to Modern Times*, London, 1918.
V. O. KLIUCHEVSKI, *History of Russia*.
J. MAVOR, *Economic History of Russia*.
W. R. MORFILL, *A History of Russia*, N. Y., Pott and Co., 1902.
There exists a voluminous literature concerning Catherine and her reign, much of which is, however, absolutely unreliable.

IV. THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE—XIX CENTURY

- A. Alexander I. His youth, education and liberal inclinations.
Murder of his father, his advent to the throne.
Attempts at some liberal reforms; Speranski and his constitutional plans.
Relations with Napoleon.
Conquest of Finland and the grant of a constitution.
The war with Napoleon of 1811–1812.
Congress of Vienna; Alexander, the liberator of Europe and savior of Prussia.
The Polish Constitution.
Alexander in Paris; his great influence on western politics.
The Holy Alliance; Alexander's relations with the United States.
Change in Alexander's Russian policy.
Educational system; intellectual influences; economic difficulties; literature, religion.
The return from abroad of the Russian armies.
Sudden death of Alexander in the South of Russia.
- B. Nicholas I. His youth, education and autocratic tastes.
The uprising of 1825 at the time of his advent to the throne.
Dark period of reaction in Russia.
The Polish insurrection of 1831.
Turkish war; Hungarian campaign.
European reaction and the rôle of Nicholas.
The new bureaucracy; the peasant-serfs; the army.
Educational reaction; great literary awakening.
Seeming strength and inward weakness of Russia.
The Crimean War and defeat.

C. Alexander II. His youth and advent to the throne during the Crimean disaster. Congress of Paris; restrictions laid upon Russia.

The liberal reforms:

1. Emancipation of the serfs, 1861.
2. Local self-government (zemstvos and municipalities), 1864, 1870.
3. Courts of law, 1864.

Second Polish insurrection, 1863.

Insincerity of some reforms and the consequent reaction; opposition of some social classes.

The aristocracy, gentry and bureaucracy after the emancipation.

The Turkish War, the Balkan States and Europe; The Congress of Berlin; Bismarck and Beaconsfield.

Alexander's foreign policy; Gorchakof; influence of Prussia.

Central Asia and the Caucasus.

Economic and financial policy.

Education, literature, religion, art.

The revolutionary movement; Alexander's death.

D. Alexander III. His youth and education; advent to the throne after his father's murder.

Systematic reaction; his ministers, especially Count D. Tolstoi and Pobiedonostsev.

Political persecutions, growing constantly in intensity.

Oppression of the non-Slavic nationalities.

Education, literature, religion; the revolutionary movement and social democracy.

Alexander's foreign policy; friendship with France and dislike of Germany and England.

Conquests and colonization in Central Asia. Trans-Siberian Railway.

Economic development of Russia.

Readings:

VAL. DE GORLOF, *Origines et Phases de l'Alliance franco-russe*, Paris, Grosset, 1913.

J. F. HECKER, *Russian Sociology*, N. Y., 1915.

KINGLAKE, *The Crimean War* (The best and most detailed account of this terrible struggle).

A. KORNILOV, *Modern Russian History*, Knopf, N. Y.

M. KOVALEVSKY, *Russian Political Institutions*, Chicago, 1902.

S. M. KRAVCHINSKY, *Russian Peasantry*, Dutton, 1905.

P. A. KROPOTKINE, *Ideals and Realities in Russian Literature*, N. Y., 1915.

P. A. KROPOTKINE, *Russian Literature*, N. Y., 1905.

T. G. MASARYK, *Spirit of Russia*, Macmillan Co., 1919.

J. MAVOR, *Economic History of Russia*, Dutton, 1914.

P. N. MILIUKOV, *Russia and Its Crisis*, 1905.

P. VINOGRADOFF, *Self-Government in Russia*, London, 1916.

The following works were formerly considered as standard investigations, but are at present out of date and antiquated:

A. LEROY-BEAULIEU, *The Empire of the Tsars*, 1893.

D. MCKENZIE WALLACE, *Russia*, 1912.

A. RAMBAUD, *History of Russia*, 1885.

V. RUSSIA AND THE REVOLUTION

- A. The reign of Nicholas II. His education, character and proclivities. Social surroundings. The court. The ruling classes and the bureaucracy. The gentry, the peasantry and other classes. The foreign policy. The Hague Conferences; their origin and achievements; alliance with France and influences of Germany; England; United States. The strife in the Far East and consequent war with Japan. Port Arthur and Dalny. The army. The navy. Korea. Commerce in the Far East. Manchuria. Russian-Chinese Bank and Railway. Portsmouth Treaty. Rôle of President Roosevelt.

Readings:

The cited works of A. KORNILOV, J. MAVOR, V. DE GORLOF, MACKENZIE WALLACE; see also ASAKAWA, *Russo-Japanese Conflict*.

A. J. BEVERIDGE, *The Russian Advance*, N. Y., Harpers, 1904.

C. J. H. HAYES, *Modern Europe*, Vol. II.

CH. RIVET, *The Last of the Romanoffs*, London, 1918.

- B. Causes and consequences of the military defeat; liberal concessions; the manifesto of October, 1905; the first Russian Parliament (the Imperial Duma).

The Russian Constitution; its main principles and outline.

Insincerity of these reforms and measures.

The first two Dumas; the third Duma; the rôle of the upper chamber.

The increasing reaction; Prime Minister P. Stolypine; his agrarian reform.

Political persecutions and degeneration of the police system (treachery of Asef and murder of Stolypine).

Development of the revolutionary movement.

- C. The economic and financial situation.

Growing industry; the labor question and unrest.

Education; universities (their participation in politics), technical, medical and other schools; women's education; primary schools (government, church, zemstvo, municipal, private).

Literature, science, music, art.

Influences of the western countries, which no police measures could stop.

Readings:

M. BARING, *An Outline of Russian Literature*, London, 1915.

M. BARING, *Landmarks in Russian Literature*, 1910.

W. H. BEABLE, *Commercial Russia*, London, 1918.

- P. A. KROPOTKINE, *Ideals and Realities in Russian Literature*, 1915.
 P. A. KROPOTKINE, *Russian Literature*, 1905.
 T. J. MASARYK, *Spirit of Russia*, 1919.
 J. MAVOR, *An Economic History of Russia*, 1914, Vol. II.
 P. N. MILIUKOV, *Russia and Its Crisis*, 1905.
 MONTAGU-NATHAN, *Contemporary Russian Composers*, 1917.
 A. RAFFALOVITCH, *Russia, Its Trade and Commerce*, 1918.
 A. READE, *Russia under Nicholas II*, 1918.
 H. W. WILLIAMS, *Russia of the Russians*, 1916.
 K. ZILLIACUS, *Russian Revolutionary Movement*, 1905.

- D. Foreign policy, preceding the World's War.
 The Far Eastern question; Japan, China, Manchuria, Mongolia.
 The Balkan States.
 Turkey and the Straits; Palestine; Armenia.
 Persia; Afganistan; Central Asia; Treaty with England in 1907.
 Relations with Russia's future enemies; Germany and the Kaiser; Turkey, Constantinople, Berlin-Bagdad railway; Bulgaria; Austria-Hungary; the Mürzsteg Convention; other agreements and conflicts Russia's position and policy among the other Slavic nations.
 Relations with Russia's future allies; France and her craving for a strong alliance with Russia to counterbalance Germany; French military missions and visits to Russia; French loans and other forms of assistance.
 England: attempt of King Edward VII to encircle Germany; his visit to Reval in 1908; agreement with Russia after generations of opposition.

Readings:

- J. A. BEVERIDGE, *The Russian Advance*, 1904.
 E. G. BROWNE, *The Persian Revolution*, 1905-1909.
 A. BULLARD, *The Diplomacy of the Great War*.
 PERCY DEARMER, *Russia and Britain*, Oxford Univ. Press, 1915.
 C. J. H. HAYES, *Modern Europe*, Vol. II.
 Y. N. SCHELKING, *Game of Diplomacy*, London, 1918.
 W. M. SHUSTER, *The Strangling of Persia*.
 M. S. STANOYEVICH, *Russian Foreign Policy in the East*, San Francisco 1916.

- E. The Great War.
 Russia and Serbia.
 The Russian mobilization.
 The German declaration of war.
 Strategic position of Russia and of her armies.
 Her rôle towards France; the invasion of East Prussia.
 Russia's military effort.
 Why she failed in 1915.
 Turkey, the Straits and Bulgaria.
 Allied help and lack of understanding.
 War aims and peace aims.
 Campaign of 1916; Sukomlinov's trial.

Rumania, Galicia, the Caucasus.
The Tsar and the Grand Duke Nicholas.
The Navy: in the Baltic; in the Black Sea.

Readings:

E. J. DILLON, *Eclipse of Russia*, 1918.
B. GOURKO, *War and Revolution in Russia*, Macmillan Co., 1919.
H. S. KING, *Russia During the War*, 1919, London.
O. D. LOURIÉ, *La Russie en 1914-1917*, Paris, Alcan, 1918.
ST. WASHBURN, *Field Notes from the Russian Front*, London, 1915.
ST. WASHBURN, *The Russian Advance*, N. Y., 1917.

F. The Revolution.

Growing social unrest and increasing general discontent.
Physical causes; food shortage, etc.
Psychical causes; disillusionment in the war aims; war-weariness; distrust of government.
Government policy of suspicion and oppression.
Personalities and characters surrounding the Tsar. The Court, the Empress, the Government, the ruling class, Rasputine.
The revolutionary movement, at home and abroad.
The different political parties and their rôle during the war.
The Imperial Duma and the Council of Empire.
Oppressed nationalities; German propaganda.
The outbreak of March, 1917; the abdication of Tsar Nicholas; the First Provisional Government; its program; its policy; causes of its weakness.
Kerenski and the Allies. The abortive offensive of June, 1917. Kornilov and the increasing weakness of Kerenski.

G. The rise of the revolutionary tide.

The Bolshevik uprising of November, 1917; causes of its success.
The system of government of the Bolsheviki; their ideals and methods of administration.
The Constituent Assembly; its history and fate at the hands of the Bolsheviki.
The reign of terror of the first months.
Peace of Brest-Litovsk. Poland and Finland.
The Ukraine and Hetman Skoropadski.
First year of Bolshevik rule (1918).
Similarities with the French Revolution and main points of difference.
Separation of Siberia; Provisional Government of Omsk; Admiral Kolchak.
Allied policy in Siberia (Japan, United States).
Peace Conference at Paris; position of Russia and the Russians.
Allied policy toward Russia at Paris; the Prinkipo proposal and missions to the Bolsheviki.
The Baltic question; the army of General Youdenitch; causes of its two consecutive breakdowns.

Rise of General Denikine in the South of Russia; 1919; the Cossacks.
 The Caucasus; the Southern Republics; Armenia; Persia.
 Failures of Kolchak and Denikine in the autumn of 1919.
 Second year of the Bolshevik rule (1919).
 The blockade and trade with Russia.
 Changes in the Allied policies during the spring of 1920; causes and consequences.

Readings:

- Anon. *Bolshevik Aims and Ideals*, Macmillan Co., 1919.
 E. ANTONELLI, *Bolshevik Russia*, 1920.
 E. BUISSON, *Les Bolsheviki*, Paris, Fischbacher, 1919.
 M. W. DAVIS, *Open Gates to Russia*, 1920.
 S. A. KORFF, *Russian and French Revolutions*, Yale Review, April, 1919.
 R. E. C. LONG, *Russian Revolutionary Aspects*, 1919.
 A. MASSON, *Histoire Complète de la Révolution Russe*, Paris, Boccard, 1918.
 P. N. MILIUKOV, *Bolshevism*, N. Y., 1920.
 C. K. CUMMING and W. W. PETTIT, *Russian-American Relations*, 1917-1920.
 E. A. ROSS, *Russia in Upheaval*, 1918.
 C. E. RUSSELL, *Unchained Russia*, 1918.
 J. SPARGO, *Bolshevism*, 1919.
 J. SPARGO, *The Greatest Failure in All History*, N. Y., 1920.
 LEON TROTSKY, *History of the Russian Revolution to Brest-Litvsk*, London, 1919. (His point of view and theories are often distorted and always one-sided, but his narrative is substantially correct.)
 E. VANDERVELDE, *Three Aspects of the Russian Revolution*, London, 1918.
 W. E. WALLING, *Sovietism*, 1920.
 E. H. WILCOX, *Russia's Ruin*, 1919.
 H. W. WILLIAMS, *The Spirit of the Russian Revolution*, 1919.
 R. WILTON, *Russia's Agony*, London, 1918.

